

OTTERY ST. MARY  
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

19<sup>52</sup>.

F. N. SIDEBOTHAM

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.



URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF OTTERY SAINT MARY.

To the Chairman and Members of the  
Ottery Saint Mary Urban District Council .

I beg to present to you a statement of the Public Health of your District for the year 1952.

Vital Statistics.

Live Births	...	27.
Still Births	...	0.
Boys ..	16.	
Girls ..	11.	

There were no illegitimate births.

Deaths.

In our own district	...	43.
Transferable from other districts	14.	
Males ..	32	
Females.	25	

Of these deaths:-

- 2 had reached the age of 90 years and upward.
- 17 had reached the age of 80 years and upward.
- 15 had reached the age of 70 years and upward.

There were four deaths of children under one year - two of these were accidentally suffocated in their cot or perambulator.

There were eleven deaths from Cancer; none from Tuberculosis; three accidental deaths; and no case of suicide.

The average age of death was about 70 years.

Hospital.

The following details have been given by the Secretary of the Ottery Saint Mary District Cottage Hospital, viz:-

Admissions	...	365.
Discharges	...	348.
Out Patients	...	595.
Out Patients Attendance ..		2,260.
Operations	...	235.
Deaths	...	11.

Physiotherapy Department. During the year 135 patients attended, and 1,781 treatments were given.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

The Infant Welfare Centre is open every week except during holiday periods. During this year it was open 47 times.

On the Register there were:- 69 Mothers; 81 Children. The attendances were as follows, viz:-

Mothers	...	632.
Infants	...	408.
Toddlers	...	366.

Prevalence and Treatment of Infectious Diseases.

I received the following notifications of Infectious Diseases during the year, viz:-

Measles	4.
Tuberculosis	3.
(All medical. Two of these were already notified when they came to reside in this district).	
Polio-Myelitis	0.
Scarlet Fever	0.
Whooping Cough	11.
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	0.
Dysentery	3.
Erysipelas	2.
Paratyphoid "B"	1.



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The three cases of Dysentery were all cases from Tipton St. John, and it was considered that they contracted the disease while they had been out of this area.

The case of Paratyphoid, although living on West Hill was at work in another district where a particular strain of Paratyphoid had been isolated, and it was thought that the case on West Hill linked up with cases from the district in which she worked.

I have received no records of Venereal Diseases. The nearest Centre for treatment is at Exeter, and presumably, any cases that occur in this district go to Exeter direct for treatment, and do not come under my notice.

#### National Health Service Act 1946.

The local Medical Practitioners work well with the District Nurses in the District, and jointly are responsible for the Treatment and welfare of Expectant and Nursing Mothers. Any difficult cases are transferred to the Specialist services at the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital. In emergencies the Specialists are always prepared to come to the district to visit and give their help. The young children up to 5 years of age have the services of the Infant Welfare Centre, and the health visitor visits these young children when necessary. Older children attending school are catered for by the School Medical Services.

#### National Assistance Act 1948.

Section 47. No action has been taken under this section during the year.

#### Food poisoning outbreaks.

There have been no outbreaks during the year.

#### Water Supply.

In accordance with the Order and arrangements previously made The East Devon Water Board took over the Council's Water Undertaking on 1st July 1952. The Water Supply on the whole was satisfactory throughout the year, both in quality and quantity. The few properties situate in the higher parts of the town and connected to the low level mains were affected at peak periods of demand and several complaints were made, due to the inadequate supply. It is understood that the new Board are cognisant of the facts and contemplate improvements during the coming year.



The several samples of water taken of the town supply for Bacteriological Examination were all reported as being satisfactory and of Class I quality.

Constructional works to the new borehole at Greatwell were continued during the year, only slow progress was made due to labour and material difficulties.

The parish of Tipton St. John is still dependent upon shallow wells for the greater part of their domestic water supply and, as indicated by the Bacteriological examination of several of the wells this source of supply must remain suspect and be the cause of considerable anxiety until such time as a new water supply is made available. The East Devon Water Board have decided to give the matter urgent attention and to afford priority to a scheme including the laying of a main from Ottery St. Mary through the parish of Wiggaton to Tipton St. John.

The greater part of the West Hill area is supplied with water by a private company (Sir John Kennaway); this supply is considered satisfactory in both quality and quantity.

Private wells of varying depths meet the requirements of the remainder of the district; samples taken for Bacteriological Examination indicate a considerable degree of variance in the quality of the water in the wells.

#### Sewerage.

No changes or alterations were made to the main sewage disposal works accommodating the greater part of the town area. It is becoming increasingly obvious that some enlargement or modification of the existing works will have to be carried out in the near future to meet the requirements of the housing programmes now envisaged.

The scattered nature of proposed and existing residential development in the districts outside the town area makes the disposal of sewage a difficult problem, and the provision of separate cesspools and septic tanks is at present the only solution.

The Council do not provide, and do not contemplate, a service for the emptying of cesspits - present arrangements appear to be satisfactory.





Inspection of Factories and Workshops.  
Factories Acts 1937 and 1948.

	<u>No. on</u> <u>Register.</u>	<u>No. of</u> <u>Inspections.</u>
Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 and 6 are enforced by Local Authority.	17	89
Factories not included in above in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority.	24	31
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority, Building Sites, &c.	<u>17</u>	<u>70</u>
Totals	<u>58</u>	<u>190</u>

Defects found and remedied:-

Unsuitable or defective Sanitary conveniences    4.

Housing.

Number of Dwellings Erected:-

By Local Authority.	9.
By Other Bodies or Persons (including 2 conversions).	<u>11.</u>
Total	<u>20.</u>

Meat and Other Foods.

Inspections have been carried out to Butchers Shops, Bakchouses, and other food preparing premises - in no instance was formal action necessary. In the case of cafes and restaurants a definite improvement has been noted in the premises and personnel engaged on the preparation of food for meals.

The following meat and other foods were condemned as unfit for human consumption, viz:-

Beef	337 lbs.
Mutton	53 lbs.
Tinned Meats	34 lbs.
Miscellaneous	<u>28 lbs.</u>
Total	<u>452 lbs.</u>

I am, Ladies & Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

(signed) F. N. SIDEBOTHAM.

Medical Officer of Health.

